

What is claimed is:

1. An image status estimating method for estimating a status of an image, comprising:

5 dividing an image into a plurality of areas;
 computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas; and

10 computing a statistic amount for estimation of the status of the image using the characteristic amount.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein said image is divided according to tone level information of a pixel forming the image.

15 3. The method according to claim 1, wherein said statistic amount is computed using the characteristic amount for each said area and a weight coefficient corresponding to each said area.

20 4. The method according to claim 3, wherein said statistic amount is obtained by adding the weight coefficient for each said area as a weight and computing a weighted average value
25 between areas of the characteristic amount.

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5. The method according to claim 3, wherein
said statistic amount is obtained by adding
the weight coefficient for each said area as a
5 weight and computing standard deviation of the
characteristic amount.

6. The method according to claim 3, wherein
said weight coefficient is determined based on
10 a number of pixels forming a corresponding the area.

7. The method according to claim 6, wherein
when the number of pixels forming the area is
smaller than a predetermined threshold, a weight
15 coefficient for the area is set to 0.

8. The method according to claim 3, wherein
said weight coefficient is determined
corresponding to the area in a corresponding
20 position on the image.

9. The method according to claim 8, wherein
when the position of the area is closer to a
center of the image, the weight coefficient for the
25 area is set to a larger value.

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10. The method according to claim 1, wherein
a tone level of a pixel forming part of the
image is converted into a brightness value, and the
5 characteristic amount is computed using the
conversion result.

11. The method according to claim 1, wherein
a tone level of a pixel forming part of the
10 image is converted into a chroma value, and the
characteristic amount is computed using the
conversion result.

12. The method according to claim 1, wherein
15 characteristic amounts corresponding to
respective pixels forming the image are averaged,
and the characteristic amount is computed using an
obtained average value.

20 13. The method according to claim 1, wherein
said image is divided into a plurality of
areas according to tone level information and
positional information about pixels forming the
image.

dividing an image into a plurality of areas;
computing a characteristic amount for each of
5 the plurality of areas;

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        comparing the computed statistic amount with a
10    predetermined value;

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correcting the original image using the
correcting parameter.

generating a plurality of corrected images by
correcting the original image using a plurality of
20 different correcting parameters;

computing characteristic amounts for the
plurality of areas corresponding to the plurality
25 of corrected images;

5 defining a corrected image obtained using a
correcting parameter corresponding to a statistic
amount closest to a predetermined value among the
computed statistic amounts as an appropriate
corrected image.

16. An image correcting method for correcting an original image, comprising:

a second step of dividing the corrected image
into a plurality of areas;

20 a fourth step of computing a statistic amount
indicating a status of a corrected image using the
characteristic amount;

a fifth step of defining the corrected image
as an appropriate corrected image when the computed
25 statistic amount is close to a predetermined value,

generating a corrected image for the original image by changing a value of the correcting parameter when the computed statistic amount is not close to the predetermined value, and transferring control to said second step.

17. An image correction apparatus which corrects an original image, comprising:

an area division unit dividing the original image into a plurality of areas;

a characteristic amount computation unit computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas;

a statistic amount computation unit computing a statistic amount indicating a status of an image using the characteristic amount;

a correcting parameter setting unit comparing the computed statistic amount with a predetermined value, and determining a correcting parameter based on a comparison result; and

an image correction unit correcting the original image using the correcting parameter.

18. The apparatus according to claim 17, further comprising

a weight coefficient computation unit
computing a weight coefficient for each area,
wherein

5 said statistic amount computation unit
computes the statistic amount using the
characteristic amount for each area and the weight
coefficient for each area.

19. An image correction apparatus which corrects
10 an original image, comprising:

a first image correction unit correcting the
original image using a plurality of correcting
parameters and generating a plurality of corrected
images;

15 an area division unit dividing each of the
plurality of corrected images into a plurality of
areas;

a characteristic amount computation unit
computing a characteristic amount for each of the
20 plurality of areas;

a statistic amount computation unit computing
a statistic amount indicating a status of an image
using the characteristic amount; and

a second image correction unit determining a
25 corrected image obtained using the correcting

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a second image correction unit defining a corrected image obtained using the correcting parameter corresponding to a statistic amount closest to a predetermined value among the plurality of computed statistic amounts as a correction result.

21. An image correction apparatus which corrects an original image, comprising:

an area division unit dividing the original
5 image into a plurality of areas;

a characteristic amount computation unit
computing a characteristic amount for each of the
plurality of areas;

a characteristic amount correction unit
10 correcting the characteristic amount using a
plurality of correcting parameters, and generating
a plurality of corrected characteristic amounts;

a statistic amount computation unit computing
a statistic amount indicating a status of an image
15 using the corrected characteristic amount; and

an image correction unit correcting the
original image using the correcting parameter
corresponding to a statistic amount closest to a
20 predetermined value.

22. An image correction apparatus which corrects an original image, comprising:

a correcting parameter setting unit setting a
25 correcting parameter;

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a first image correction unit correcting the original image using a correcting parameter set by said correcting parameter setting unit, and generating a corrected image;

5 an area division unit dividing the corrected image into a plurality of areas;

a characteristic amount computation unit computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas;

10 a statistic amount computation unit computing a statistic amount indicating a status of an image using the characteristic amount; and

a second image correction unit instructing said correcting parameter setting unit to set a new correcting parameter if the computed statistic amount is closer to a predetermined value than a previously obtained statistic amount, and defining a corrected image obtained using the correcting parameter corresponding to the previously obtained statistic amount as a correction result if the
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previously obtained statistic amount is closer to the predetermined value than the computed statistic amount.

25 23. An image correction apparatus which corrects

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an original image, comprising:

an area division unit dividing the original image into a plurality of areas;

5 a correcting parameter setting unit setting a correcting parameter;

10 a first image correction unit correcting the original image divided into the plurality of areas using the correcting parameter set by said correcting parameter setting unit, and generating a corrected image;

a characteristic amount computation unit computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas of the corrected image;

15 a statistic amount computation unit computing a statistic amount indicating a status of an image using the characteristic amount; and

20 a second image correction unit instructing said correcting parameter setting unit to set a new correcting parameter if the computed statistic amount is closer to a predetermined value than a previously obtained statistic amount, and defining a corrected image obtained using the correcting parameter corresponding to the previously obtained statistic amount as a correction result if the
25 previously obtained statistic amount is closer to

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the predetermined value than the computed statistic amount.

24. An image correction apparatus which corrects
5 an original image, comprising:

an area division unit dividing the original image into a plurality of areas;

10 a characteristic amount computation unit computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas;

a correcting parameter setting unit setting a correcting parameter;

15 an characteristic amount correction unit correcting the characteristic amount using the correcting parameter set by said correcting parameter setting unit, and generating a corrected characteristic amount;

20 a statistic amount computation unit computing a statistic amount indicating a status of an image using the corrected characteristic amount; and

25 a second image correction unit instructing said correcting parameter setting unit to set a new correcting parameter if the computed statistic amount is closer to a predetermined value than a previously obtained statistic amount, and defining

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a corrected image obtained using the correcting parameter corresponding to the previously obtained statistic amount as a correction result if the previously obtained statistic amount is closer to the predetermined value than the computed statistic amount.

25. An image correction apparatus which corrects an original image, comprising:

10 area division means for dividing the original image into a plurality of areas;

characteristic amount computation means for computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas;

15 statistic amount computation means for computing a statistic amount indicating a status of an image using the characteristic amount;

correcting parameter setting means for comparing the computed statistic amount with a predetermined value, and determining a correcting parameter based on a comparison result; and

20 image correction means for correcting the original image using the correcting parameter.

25 26. An image correction apparatus which corrects

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an original image, comprising:

first image correction means for correcting the original image using a plurality of correcting parameters and generating a plurality of corrected images;

area division means for dividing each of the plurality of corrected images into a plurality of areas;

characteristic amount computation means for computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas;

statistic amount computation means for computing a statistic amount indicating a status of an image using the characteristic amount; and

second image correction means for determining a corrected image obtained using the correcting parameter corresponding to the statistic amount closest to a predetermined value among the plurality of computed statistic amounts as a correction result.

27. An image correction apparatus which corrects an original image, comprising:

area division means for dividing the original image into a plurality of areas;

first image correction means for correcting the original image divided into the plurality of areas using a plurality of correcting parameters, and generating a plurality of corrected images;

5 characteristic amount computation means for computing a characteristic amount for each of a plurality of areas of the corrected images;

10 statistic amount computation for computing a statistic amount indicating a status of an image using the characteristic amount; and

15 second image correction means for defining a corrected image obtained using the correcting parameter corresponding to a statistic amount closest to a predetermined value among the plurality of computed statistic amounts as a correction result.

28. An image correction apparatus which corrects an original image, comprising:

20 area division means for dividing the original image into a plurality of areas;

characteristic amount computation means for computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas;

25 characteristic amount correction means for

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correcting the characteristic amount using a plurality of correcting parameters, and generating a plurality of corrected characteristic amounts;

5 statistic amount computation means for computing a statistic amount indicating a status of an image using the corrected characteristic amount; and

10 image correction means for correcting the original image using the correcting parameter corresponding to a statistic amount closest to a predetermined value.

29. An image correction apparatus which corrects an original image, comprising:

15 correcting parameter setting means for setting a correcting parameter;

20 first image correction means for correcting the original image using a correcting parameter set by said correcting parameter setting means, and generating a corrected image;

area division means for dividing the corrected image into a plurality of areas;

25 characteristic amount computation means for computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas;

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statistic amount computation means for computing a statistic amount indicating a status of an image using the characteristic amount; and

second image correction means for instructing
5 said correcting parameter setting means to set a new correcting parameter if the computed statistic amount is closer to a predetermined value than a previously obtained statistic amount, and defining
10 a corrected image obtained using the correcting parameter corresponding to the previously obtained statistic amount as a correction result if the previously obtained statistic amount is closer to the predetermined value than the computed statistic amount.

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30. An image correction apparatus which corrects an original image, comprising:

area division means for dividing the original image into a plurality of areas;

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correcting parameter setting means for setting a correcting parameter;

first image correction means for correcting
the original image divided into the plurality of
areas using the correcting parameter set by said
25 correcting parameter setting means, and generating

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a corrected image;

characteristic amount computation means for computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas of the corrected image;

5 statistic amount computation means for computing a statistic amount indicating a status of an image using the characteristic amount; and

second image correction means for instructing said correcting parameter setting means to set a
 10 new correcting parameter if the computed statistic amount is closer to a predetermined value than a previously obtained statistic amount, and defining a corrected image obtained using the correcting parameter corresponding to the previously obtained
 15 statistic amount as a correction result if the previously obtained statistic amount is closer to the predetermined value than the computed statistic amount.

20 31. An image correction apparatus which corrects an original image, comprising:

area division means for dividing the original image into a plurality of areas;

characteristic amount computation means for
 25 computing a characteristic amount for each of the

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plurality of areas;

correcting parameter setting means for setting
a correcting parameter;

characteristic amount correction means for
5 correcting the characteristic amount using the
correcting parameter set by said correcting
parameter setting means, and generating a corrected
characteristic amount;

10 statistic amount computation means for
computing a statistic amount indicating a status of
an image using the corrected characteristic amount;
and

second image correction means for instructing
said correcting parameter setting means to set a
15 new correcting parameter if the computed statistic
amount is closer to a predetermined value than a
previously obtained statistic amount, and defining
a corrected image obtained using the correcting
parameter corresponding to the previously obtained
20 statistic amount as a correction result if the
previously obtained statistic amount is closer to
the predetermined value than the computed statistic
amount.

25 32. A computer-readable storage medium storing a

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program used to direct a computer for estimating a status of an image to perform a process, comprising:

- dividing an image into a plurality of areas;
- 5 computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas; and
- computing a statistic amount for estimation of the status of the image using the characteristic amount.

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33. A computer-readable storage medium storing a program used to direct a computer for correcting an original image to perform a process, comprising:

- dividing an image into a plurality of areas;
- 15 computing a characteristic amount for each of the plurality of areas;
- computing a statistic amount for estimation of the status of the image using the characteristic amount;

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comparing the computed statistic amount with a predetermined value;

determining a correcting parameter based on the comparison result; and

- correcting the original image using the
- 25 correcting parameter.

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5 generating a plurality of corrected images by
correcting the original image using a plurality of
different correcting parameters;

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10      computing characteristic amounts for the
      plurality of areas corresponding to the plurality
      of corrected images;

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defining a corrected image obtained using a
correcting parameter corresponding to a statistic
amount closest to a predetermined value among the
20 computed statistic amounts as an appropriate
corrected image.